

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. An inflatable toy comprising:
an inflatable volume; and
an expandable figurine that is attached to the inflatable volume such that the figurine is stretched as the volume is inflated.
2. An inflatable toy as defined in Claim 1, wherein the inflatable volume has an outer surface and the expandable figurine comprises a body portion having multiple limbs, such that the figurine is attached to the inflatable volume outer surface.
3. An inflatable toy as defined in Claim 1, wherein the figurine has limb portions extending from a body portion and is attached to the inflatable volume outer surface, such that the limb portions are pulled away from the figurine body portion as the volume is inflated, providing a differential stretching of the figurine.
4. An inflatable toy as defined in Claim 1, wherein the figurine has a differential construction such that different portions of the figurine have a different propensity to expand, such that the figurine is stretched in a differential manner as the volume is inflated.

5. An inflatable toy as defined in Claim 1, wherein the expandable figurine has a bottom surface that is adhesively attached to the inflatable volume.
6. An inflatable toy as defined in Claim 5, wherein the figurine is removably attached to the inflatable volume.
7. An inflatable toy as defined in Claim 6, further comprising a convex distortion, in the shape of the figurine, on the inflatable volume produced as a result of removing the figurine from the inflatable volume after a previous inflation of the inflatable volume with the figurine attached.
8. An inflatable toy as defined in Claim 1, wherein the inflatable volume comprises a latex balloon.
9. An inflatable toy as defined in Claim 1, wherein the expandable figurine comprises a rubberized shape having a bottom surface that is sufficiently tacky so as to adhesively attach to the inflatable volume.
10. An inflatable toy as defined in Claim 1, wherein the expandable figurine assumes a first predetermined shape when the inflatable volume is in a deflated state, and assumes a different shape representing a distortion of the first predetermined shape when the inflatable volume is substantially inflated.

11. An inflatable toy method comprising:
- providing an inflatable toy comprising an expandable figurine attached to an outer surface of an inflatable volume;
- inflating the inflatable volume and stretching the figurine as the inflatable volume is inflated.
12. A method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the expandable figurine comprises a body portion having multiple limbs, and attaching comprises attaching the limbs to the inflatable volume outer surface.
13. A method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the figurine has limb portions extending from a body portion and attaching comprises attaching the figurine to the inflatable volume outer surface, such that the limb portions are pulled away from the figurine body portion as the volume is inflated, providing a differential stretching of the figurine.
14. A method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the figurine has a differential construction such that different portions of the figurine have a different propensity to expand, and stretching comprises stretching the figurine in a differential manner as the volume is inflated.
15. A method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the expandable figurine has a bottom surface that is adhesively attached to the inflatable volume.

16. A method as defined in Claim 15, wherein attaching comprises removably attaching the figurine to the inflatable volume.

17. A method as defined in Claim 16, further comprising removing the figurine from the inflatable volume after a previous inflation of the inflatable volume with the figurine attached, and leaving behind a convex distortion of the surface of the inflatable volume, in the shape of the figurine.

18. A method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the expandable figurine assumes a predetermined shape when the inflatable volume is in a deflated state, and assumes a different shape representing a distortion of the predetermined shape after the inflatable volume is substantially inflated.